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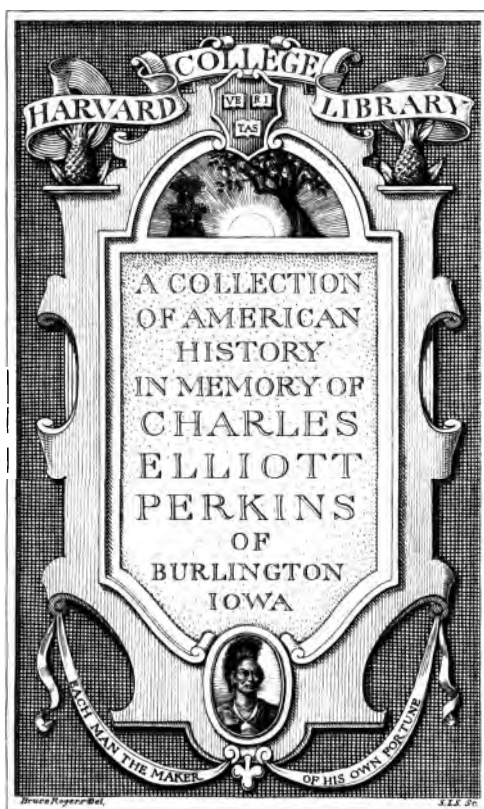
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JULIET and JOLIET

— BY —

WILLIAM GRINTON.



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JULIET AND JOLIET

—BY—

WILLIAM GRINTON

RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

TO THE

HON. GEO. H. MUNROE.

MIDSUMMER 1904



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CHARLES ELLIOTT PERKINS
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AROUND THE LOCKS, BLUFFS AND BRIDGES,
FORTY, FIFTY SIXTY YEARS AGO.

WAYSIDE TAVERNS ON THE SAC TRAIL.

THE VALLEY OF RUINS

THE ILLINOIS AND MICHIGAN CANAL.



*"Old men talk long for, in the nature of things,
they have not long to talk."—SCOTT*



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AROUND THE LOCKS AND BLUFFS AND
BRIDGES, FORTY—FIFTY—SIXTY
YEARS AGO.
JULIET.

A philosopher—Herbert Spencer—wrote: "Life is not to be estimated by its length, but by its length, multiplied by its breadth." To this apothegm may be added another: "A city is not to be estimated by the number of its inhabitants, but by the number, multiplied by the quality of its inhabitants." Applying this maxim to the early days of "Juliet," the little western village was entitled to a high rating.

Calling back from the shadowy land many forms and faces, familiar along old Hickory, Broadway and Bluff streets in the long ago, first and foremost comes Martin H. Demmond, original proprietor of West Juliet, one of the highest types of men—a Christian gentleman, a man of altruistic spirit and keen commercial instinct, a man who could take good care of his own interests and yet have time and inclination to help his fellow man.

The proprietor of West Juliet stands out in strong contrast with the rival proprietor of Juliet. Martin H. Demmond stayed by his town site, and, figuratively speaking, put it on its feet, pushed it to the front, built solid blocks of stone buildings, time and fireproof and in a good state of preservation, doing business to-day.

James B. Campbell never lived in and never did a thing for Juliet, but plat and sell his lots. If he ever gave so much as a Mexican dollar, a crossed Spanish quarter or an English sixpence for public, church or charitable pur-

JULIET AND JOLIET.

poses, no living man, woman or child remembers, and there is no tradition of it. James B. Campbell and his wife, Sarah Ann Campbell, did not even stay to sell and deed their lots, in person, but joined in executing a power of attorney to Gurdon S. Hubbard to sell and convey their real estate in Juliet. When James B. Campbell died he left his grantees, their heirs and assigns, a legacy—his wife, Sarah Ann Campbell. Immediately after the departure of James B. Campbell for some other world, Sarah Ann, although an old woman, got busy, for the Supreme Court of the State of Illinois had decided that a woman could not divest herself of her dower in real estate by power of attorney. The old lady seemed to realize that life was short, and she went for those grantees, their heirs and assigns. Some settled on the best terms they could make, but most of the lot owners stood her off and, as often happens, there was luck in leisure, for a kind Providence removed Sarah Ann from the scene of her pernicious activity—death dissolved the dower claim.

Juliet was organized as a village in '37, with a board of trustees consisting of Joel A. Matteson, president; J. J. Garland, Daniel Reed, David L. Roberts, Fenner Aldrich and Robert C. Duncan. In '41 the legislature repealed the village charter, the trustees resigned, and from this date until the city of Joliet was incorporated, June 19, 1852, there was no organization,—“In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.”

While Joliet was young—with high ideals, primitive notions of, and inexperience in political economy, the mayors and aldermen were selected from the best citizens and Joliet had mayors it was proud of.

Cornelius Covenhoven Van Horn, father of Sir William Van Horn, was first mayor and served two terms.

He was one of the sturdy pioneers, a born leader and organizer—one to go ahead, blaze the way and show others how to do things—the John D. Paige of those days.

ANCIENT BUILDINGS.

The three-story stone building on the southwest corner of Bluff and Exchange streets was the first stone building on Bluff street and was built by Martin H. Demmond in '35. It was dedicated by a grand ball which is elaborately described in George H. Woodruff's history. This old-timer remains in a good state of preservation physically, but morally it has recently fallen down and gone into the saloon business for the first time in its long history.

The Demmond stone warehouse, which was completed and began business with the opening of the canal, in '48, has been absorbed into the Porter Brewery. In the years when it was operated as a warehouse and grain elevator, the power was furnished by a large, piebald, Arabian horse, who lived a solitary life on the fourth floor, doing his daily round of duty for nearly eighteen years, with old Peter, the warehouseman, to feed, water, curry and care for him.

One night the horse, in a sleep-walking trance, fell into a deep hopper of corn and had to be hoisted out. When the warehouse was turned into a mill by Henry S. and Allen P. Carpenter, the horse elevator was not needed, so the old piebald was taken down and turned out to pasture. After all the long years of short circuit going, it was impossible to change the old horse into a long distance, straight line animal. He had acquired the one-side, short-step habit which always brought him around to the place he started from, and being the same

principle which brings men and beasts, lost on prairies, in snow storms, or in forests, around in a circle to the place of departure.

FIRST MASONIC TEMPLE.

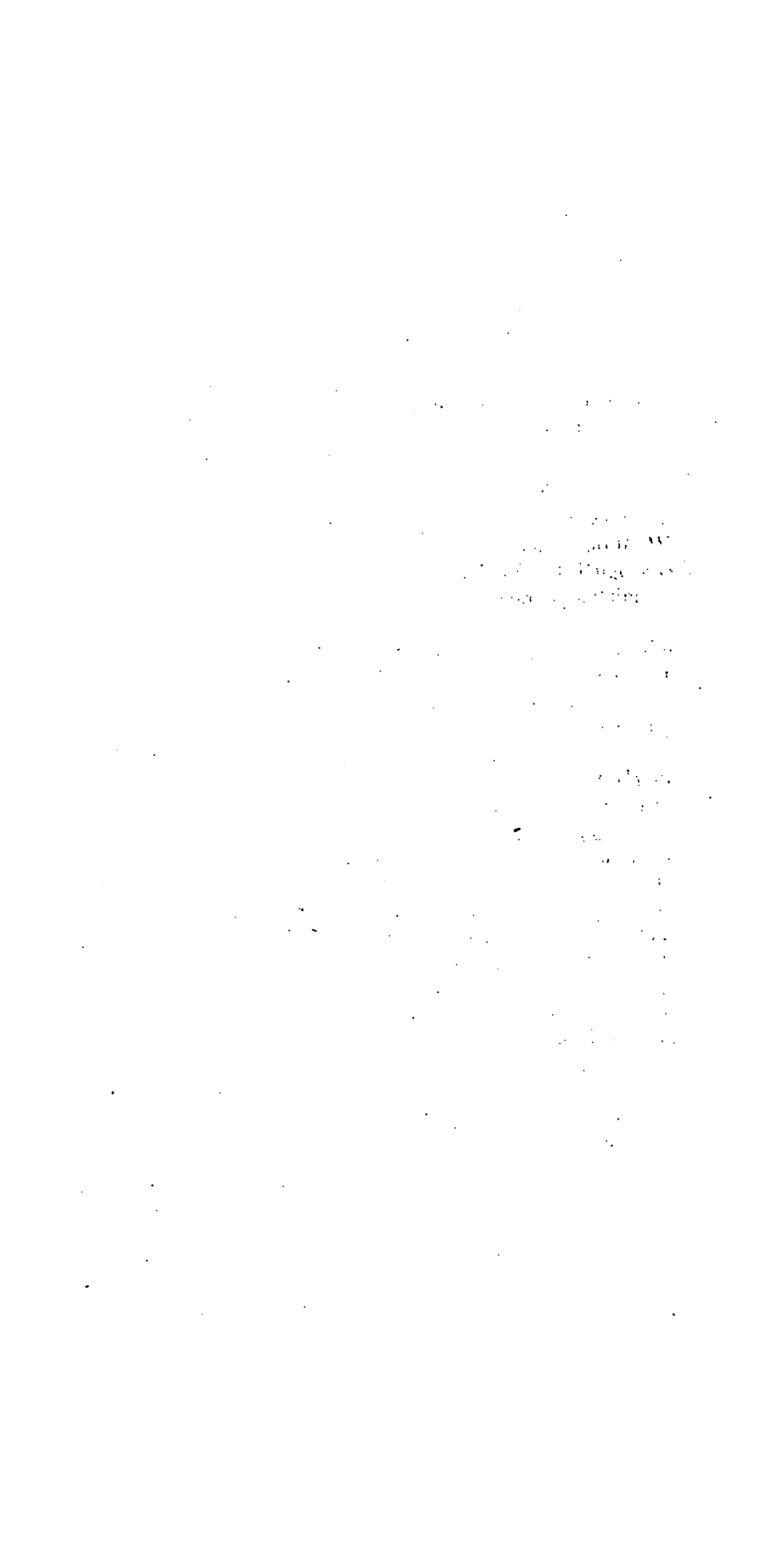
The three-story frame building on the northwest corner of Bluff and Exchange was erected about '49 by W. A. Strong and Edmund Wilcox, and John D. Paige says that it is, by actual test, the only fireproof building in Joliet.

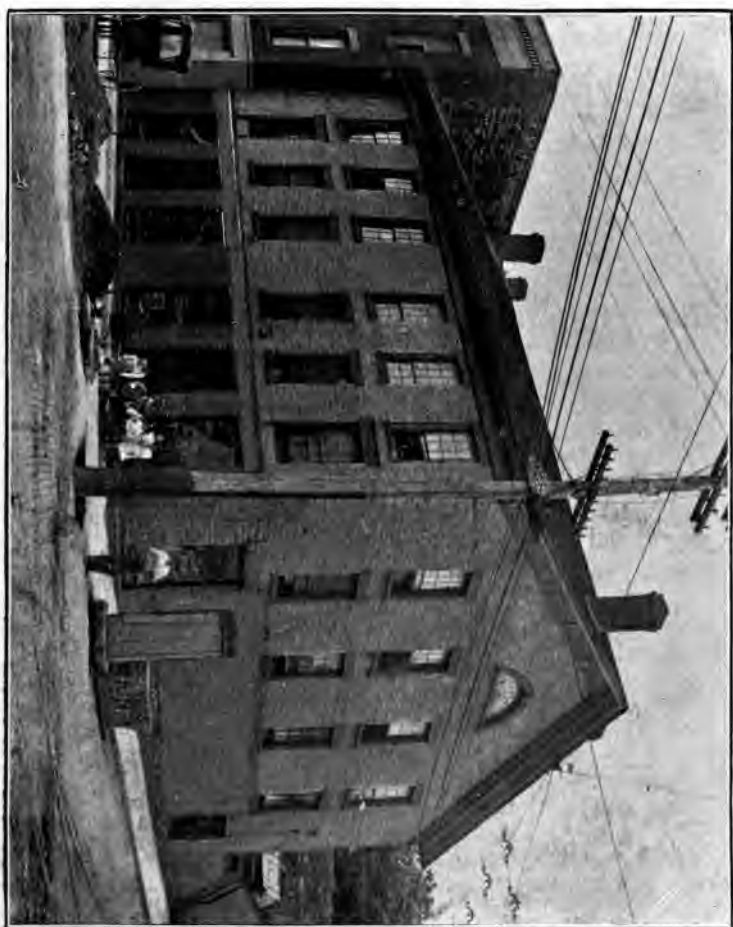
This building is rich in historical interest to both Masons and Odd Fellows, for it was their first temple in this city. For obvious reasons it is impossible to give any inside details of those old lodge rooms on the third floor.

The acacia has been laid upon and Pleyell's Hymn sung over the graves of most, if not all, of the men who were made Master Masons in the old lodge rooms.

The corner store has been continuously occupied as a hardware store ever since its erection. In '49 T. P. Dunham & Co. were selling a long list of things not to be found in modern hardware stores, such as ox yokes, ox chains, broad axes, cant hooks, grain cradles, wolf traps, candle molds, snuffers, spinning wheels, well buckets, tar buckets, linch pins, bullet molds, lancets, hunting knives, warming pans, bootjacks, tin lanterns (with no glass, the light shining through holes in the tin).

Up to about the middle of the fifties, Edmund Wilcox occupied the adjoining building with a genuine old-fashioned department store and sold almost everything in the line of merchandise. The clerks were called counter jumpers, and the dexterity with which one of these men could place his hand or hands on the counter and vault over, when he wanted to go to another counter on the





opposite side, added much to his usefulness and popularity, especially with the ladies, buying muffs as big as nail kegs, hoods, sunbonnets, bombazine dress patterns and gimp to trim them with, or changeable silks, warranted to match and harmonize with any old complexion—only a matter of point of view and light. For the men, those counter jumpers had to be good “mixers”; they had not only to be friendly and social with the farmer, but had to know how to mix “black strap,” a concoction of whisky and molasses, which was furnished by every merchant, gratis, if he wanted to compete with his rival, in trade, down at the Lock, Colonel Curry, who made a specialty of “black strap,” and whose two counter jumpers, Zim Supplee and Si Walton, were both of them expert mixers. Located as the Colonel’s store was, right at the lock, he had first chance to catch the canal boat trade. The boatman could leave his measure for a towing on Bluff street and was built by Martin H. Denmond line and his order for groceries, run down to Hatton’s meat market, and while Dave Ward was cutting a steak, take a drink at Paddock’s saloon, next door, all while the boat was passing up or down in the lock.

In those days and in those stores loaf sugar was hung up on the ceiling, and was called loaf sugar from the fact that it came in solid, cone-shaped loaves, in five and ten-pound sizes, wrapped first with fine white paper and an outside wrapper of heavy, purple-colored paper, and tied with strong twine. For illuminating purposes the stores sold burning fluid, lard oil and candles of different grades, from tallow up to wax. Camphene was a most villainous concoction of the quintessence of turpentine and alcohol, and found to be so explosive and hazardous to human life that its use was abandoned and kerosene took its place.

From the beginning, in '35, all through the forties and the first half of the fifties, Bluff and Exchange streets practically comprised the "congested district" of Juliet and Joliet; and the property owners, with Martin H. Demmond in the lead, were optimistic in their belief of the congestion's permanency.

THE NATIONAL HOTEL

Was built in '38, the brick annex in about '57; it has never changed its name to Hotel De or St. National; it has never had a fire of consequence enough to make a claim on the insurance companies; for over fifty years has not had a bar; the real estate, as the records show, has changed hands but six or seven times, and its landlords, as nearly as can be ascertained, do not exceed eight or nine. Some Joliet hotels have almost beaten that record in single years.

In the palmy days of the packet lines, the passenger dock was just south of the Exchange street bridge, and guests were landed right at the National's door. For many years this hotel was the social center of Joliet. The Masonic balls, the events of the dancing season, took place in the ball room of the National, as did almost all the other big affairs.

In the middle ages dancing began early in the evening. They danced the Virginia reel, Old Dan Tucker, Money Musk and Pop Goes the Weasel until nearly breakfast time, and it took a good-sized ball room to accommodate the immense hoop skirts of the ladies and the long-toed boots of the men.

The popular, substantial refreshments generally consisted of oyster stew, ham and tongue sandwiches, with pate de foies gras as the piece de resistance—it would resist the digestive outfit of an ostrich. It may have

been that some of the humorous things so often heard when sliced tongue makes its appearance in society originated with the wits of those olden times.

When the Rock Island Railroad was completed and got busy with passenger traffic, the National put on a bright new yellow 'bus, the first one in Joliet, with black Levi Boon for runner and a fine span of bob-tail grays to drive. Boon, 'bus and bob-tails made as many as four trips a day to the station to capture passengers and give them free transportation to the hotel. The outfit was not overworked and the grays were as fat as butter-balls.

At one time, no matter what year, the National had a landlady who did not have the most implicit confidence in her bachelor boarders, or the landlord. She made it a part of her duties to inspect the contents of that yellow 'bus on its arrival, to see if there were any suspects, anonymous or contraband packages, wrapped in silks, satins, purple and fine linen, for she would not allow any evil communications to corrupt the good manners of her hotel, but ran it on high-toned principles. The only loud thing about the National was the gong on which Levi Boon rang the changes for breakfast, dinner and supper; and in calm weather, when the wind was in the right quarter, with Levi feeling pretty gay, that gong could be heard, part of the way, from the Upper Basin to Brandon's Bridge. In its early days the National had its own system of water works—a flowing well or spring in the basement kitchen; its bell system consisted of wires from the rooms to little bells hung on springs in the office; candles in tin candlesticks were kept on a shelf in the office, and at bed time guests took their little candles and lighted themselves to their rooms. The automatic limit of those lights prevented their being worked over-

time, and there was no danger from "blowing out the gas."

OMNIBUS BLOCK.

The two-story frame building on the north side of Exchange street, at the west end of the canal bridge, was built by Thomas Hatton in '48, and was known as the Omnibus Block. It had a basement on the tow path, which was occupied by Paddock's saloon and Hatton's meat market, with Dave Ward on duty at the meat block, cutting the roasts, chops and steaks for all of the West Side and part of the East Side. W. C. Wood was in the store next the canal, selling about everything usually found in a general country store, from codfish to overcoats and hoop skirts. The grocery department was a limited affair as to variety of staple and fancy groceries, when compared with the modern stocks.

Those were the days of salt rising bread, saleratus biscuit and dried apple pies. The salt rising bread required not only skill, but luck. It could be brought out of the oven in perfection only when the moon was in the right quarter and the wind not in the east; while it was rising boys had to tread softly, whistle in a low key and not slam the doors; the cat and dog were shut out, and girls were not allowed to giggle in the kitchen. The bread makers always spoke of having good luck, or bad luck, with their baking, and the temper of the lady was usually in harmony with the bread. Eating those saleratus biscuits, with the yellow-green lumps and streaks of saleratus running through them, is probably one of those "sins of the fathers, visited on the children even unto the third and fourth generation"—of dyspeptics. The dried apple was played to the limit, in sauce and pies, until some

poor, sin-sick wretch, in the delirium of dyspepsia, broke forth in these pathetically beseeching lines:

“Tread on my corns, or tell me lies,
But feed me not dried apple pies.”

In the west store, George H. Woodruff, the historian, was selling drugs and laying away in his memory many of those interesting items of pioneer history, of which he wrote so charmingly in his later years. His was a drug store under the old regime of the lancet and copious doses of nauseous drugs. He sold calomel, quinine and cholera medicines, as staples for household use, and made a specialty of selling strychnine for poisoning wolves. His patent medicine shelves were stocked with opodeldoc, Radway's Ready Relief, Sappington's Pills and ague cures too numerous to mention. Fever and ague was as common as mosquitoes, in summer and fall, and very much easier to catch. But why it was called fever and ague instead of ague and fever is one of those things no fellow can find out. Any one who ever had the miserable shakes remembers that the ague came first—the fever followed, and how in the chills he might have prayed, “Wash me in steep down gulfs of liquid fire,” but when the fever took its turn, prayed his prayer, unsaid. Prairie in trade. Down at the Lock, Colonel Curry, who made a itch ointments and remedies were also in demand, and so was musk, hair oil and highly scented toilet soaps.

There was the usual wooden awning and awning posts in front of the Omnibus Block and there runs a legend that once upon a time—day, month and year not given—a clandestine visitor in one of the flats above the stores heard the hostess' husband coming, unexpectedly, up the stairs. With his boots tied together for emergencies and noiseless flight, the late visitor crept out upon the awning, slid down the post and, as luck would have it, into

the arms of acquaintances, who were too full to keep a secret, and the scandal leaked out. Human nature was about the same in those good old democratic times as now, only methods differed; exit, in emergencies, can now be made by fire escapes instead of awning posts.

Merchant's Row, or the Long Stone Block, a famous old landmark and pride of the street in early years, was built by Martin H. Demmond in '37, and the stores were so much alike they were numbered, to keep the merchants from mistaking their rivals' stores for their own. The block was not the success in consolidating the business of the street that its owner expected it to be, and no one succeeded in establishing as permanent a business there as has been the case in other buildings on Bluff street—fifty and sixty-year records.

Even Lee & Doane, proprietors of "The Bee Hive," had to pass it up, although they were champion hustlers for business, whose flamboyant ads would have sent Egyptian mummies hot foot after new suits of mummy cloth—if they had been in a position to read them.

The third floor of Merchants' Row was a seat of learning in '47; the Joliet Female Seminary occupying a part of it for school purposes.

The well-known reticence of ladies in the matter of time, years and ages, when personally concerned, renders it impossible to get any lady, now on earth, to admit that she was old enough to attend a seminary in '47; thus tradition and hearsay testimony is all that can be obtained.

Miss E. R. Crowley was principal; useful and ornamental branches were taught; tuition, if paid in advance, \$3.00 to \$5.00 for a quarter; if not paid in advance, \$3.50 to \$5.50; music, if paid in advance, \$8.00; if at end of term, \$10.50, being a liberal discount for spot cash.

Board, including bedding and lights, \$1.50 per week; boys under ten years were admitted—co-education, with an age limit.

The Oneida street hill footpath bears a striking resemblance to the pictures in old school histories of Israel Putnam making impossible jumps on an impossible horse "Down that steep, where no pursuers dared to leap," and has just had a new set of steps laid to replace the ones that were trod by George H. Woodruff, Martin H. Demmond, Thomas R. Hunter, William A. Strong, Senior and Junior, Dr. Bailey, Dr. Comstock, William F. Barrett, Charles Demmond, and other residents on Hickory and Broadway, when they wanted to make a short cut to and from their homes. Royal E. Barber, Hamilton D. Risley, H. N. Marsh and Col. William Smith went up the Western avenue hill—an easier grade.

The stone blacksmith shop at the foot of the Oneida hill is doing business at the old stand, as it did when Thomas R. Hunter made the sparks fly and shod fast horses for Henry K. Stevens, Thomas Hatton, Alonzo Leach and Paddock, in the days when 2:30, the record of '43, was not beaten until Flora Temple came under the wire, in '59, in 2:19½.

Micajah L. Adams' steam foundry, built in '46, became Edward H. Akin's cooper shop and was doing a flourishing business until the penitentiary made it impossible for free labor to compete with it in the cooperage line. There was a stone building at the corner of Bluff and Spring streets, built by Robert Stewart for a steam flour and planing mill, which burned in '49 and was not rebuilt.

The Belz Brewery was a little one-story frame pioneer in the beer business in Joliet, and supplied the home trade with an excellent quality of beer until the big breweries

and modern methods put it out of trade. The East Side made whisky, the West Side beer; the distilleries have all disappeared, but behold the breweries—survival of the fittest, did some one say?

GERMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

The corner stone for the first German Catholic Church in Joliet was laid April 15, 1852, and there was a big celebration on the occasion, which included, among other attractions, a German Temperance Society, in regalia and one hundred strong.

That little 40x75 stone church for which they laid the corner stone has grown into the present magnificent cathedral-like building.

THE MERCHANTS AND DROVERS BANK.

The three-story brick building at the northeast corner of the Jefferson street bridge, which escaped the general destruction of old landmarks by the drainage channel, was built in '52 by Joel A. Matteson for a store and bank. The owner occupied the store for the sale of his woolen mill products and general stock of merchandise. The basement was first occupied by a man named Ferguson for a restaurant and bar. There was a row of small private rooms, or stalls, along the west side, with windows looking out on the then clear blue water of the Basin, and they were pleasant places to dine in and see the canal boats loaded with grain and lumber poled across to and from the lumber yards and warehouses that lined the eastern bank. The Merchants and Drovers Bank, the first bank in Joliet, had its elegant suite of rooms on the second floor, with Colonel William Smith, president; Roswell E. Goodell, cashier, and E. Payson Smith, teller.

The Merchants and Drovers Bank had to do business







with the most rotten, treacherous paper currency that ever disgraced a civilized country. It could not be depended on from one hour to another, and the game was to get it off one's hands as soon as possible. The payee had no recourse upon the payor, for although the bank had failed and the payor knew it but the payee did not, if he accepted the bill he must stand the loss. Notes, drafts, contracts and checks were drawn "Payable in current funds" or "bankable funds." There was always a hustling among business men to get the day's receipts into the bank before four o'clock. Within a short time seventy-nine banks failed in the State of Ohio. All kinds of foreign coin circulated for specie payments; the English gold sovereign and silver three pence, the French Louis d'Or and silver franc, Mexican doubloon and Spanish dollar. The United States had coins running down from the big octagon fifty-dollar gold piece to the copper half cent. The business man had to have Thompson's Bank Note Reporter and Presbury & Co.'s Counterfeit Detector lying near the cash drawer to test the paper money and a bottle of aqua fortis to test the coins.

ST. PATRICK'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF JOLIET.

From the most reliable information obtainable at present it seems to be safe to state that St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church, on the corner of Exchange and Broadway, is the oldest Catholic church building now in service in the State of Illinois. In corroboration of this statement the quaint contract under which the stone work was done is here given verbatim:

"Juliet, May 1, 1839. We, the undersigned, do hereby contract for and promise to do all the stone masonry of the Catholic Church of Juliet, cut the sills and caps,

water table, arch stones, four spires and draw water and do the whole building according to the specifications for two dollars and fifty cents per perch, reserving to ourselves, however, the right of being paid fifty dollars for dressing and lettering a frontis stone in memory of the charity of the men on the Illinois canal and that of the citizens of Joliet in general.

“TIMOTHY KELLY,
“DENNIS KELLY,
“MICHAEL CASSIN.”

Payments receipted for on the back amount to \$769.00.

Robert T. Kelly, the well-known cashier of the Joliet National, is the son of Timothy Kelly, who signed this contract and was also a contractor on the canal, the Rock Island and Cut Off Railroads. It is possible that some other Catholic church in the State of Illinois can produce as good evidence of greater antiquity, but not probable.

The church, without a steeple, was built under the pastorate of Father Plunkett. Sudden death, from which it had been his life-long prayer to be delivered, came to him when returning from a sick call on horse back. Riding rapidly in a blinding March snow storm, his head bent low to shield his face, a low-hanging limb struck, crushed his skull, and instantly cut off his useful life. He who had spent his life administering the death-bed sacraments to others had to die alone, his life-long prayer unanswered and no brother priest to do for him life's last sad offices.

Father Plunkett was first buried in the basement of St. Patrick's Church, but after St. Patrick's Cemetery was consecrated his remains were buried there.

In the sixty-six years since St. Patrick's Society was organized in Juliet, nine pastors have gone among its people, guiding them through the devious, rugged paths

of life, baptizing infants, confirming children, marrying youths, consoling the sick and dying, imposing penances on delinquents, and saying masses for the souls of the dead.

Father Plunkett was succeeded by Father DuPont Davis. Father Ingoldsby was pastor on March 7, 1848, for on that date he advertised in the Joliet Signal for bids for a steeple for St. Patrick's Church, the bids to be given to R. C. Duncan or himself. The steeple was erected some time in the summer of '48. The bell was purchased in Chicago and some time in the fall of '48, after navigation had closed on the canal, Ned Conlin and Thomas Creevy's father went to bring it home in a wagon; they got stuck in a slough and the bell and wagon had to be left all winter, as the roads were too bad to move it. But the bell's troubles were not over when it was hung in this steeple; it had been on duty only about a year when Father Ingoldsby had a violent attack of the California fever and was preparing to go to the gold regions. He claimed that the bell had been bought with money subscribed by his personal friends and was given to him and not the church, and that if he was not paid back the money he would take the bell. This threat was immediately communicated to Bishop William DeVelle, a Frenchman, who, in a letter of date March 1, 1850, written on old-fashioned blue letter paper, sealed with sealing wax, no envelope, no postage stamp, but marked postage paid; authorized Timothy Kelly to take charge, on behalf of the Bishop, of the bell and all church property, and to prevent its removal by Father Ingoldsby. Mr. Kelly did his duty; employed men to watch the church at night, and Father Ingoldsby had to go to California without the bell, or its equivalent in cash.

Much allowance should be made for the conduct of

Father Ingoldsby, as a man laboring under the delirium of that California Fever was not in his normal condition and could not reason in a perfectly rational way.

For many years the bell did duty as the fire alarm for Joliet, and Eugene Daly, who lived just across the street, was the man who pulled the rope and roused the town at night to get up and form bucket lines, with pails from the stores, to put out fires.

When Exchange street cut was being excavated, it became necessary to strengthen the foundations of the church and the corner stone was taken out and the discovery was made that the copper box had been broken open and the relics stolen. The robbery must have been committed the night after the corner stone was laid and before the wall was built above it.

The East Side public school gave an exhibition in the spring of '60, and one of the principal attractions was a grand tableau of the marriage of Napoleon and Josephine. The boy to whom the priestly part had been assigned had the delicate task of procuring the necessary costume.

He asked a lady member of St. Patrick's Church if she thought Father Farley would loan a robe for the occasion and was told that he would be shown the door for his presumption in asking such an unheard-of thing. But that boy had to have a robe; he was half Irish, anyway, and the other half Scotch. The Irish are proverbial for their coaxing ways and the Scotch never give up; and the boy had always celebrated St. Patrick's Day, for by good fortune his birthday fell upon the seventeenth of March.

Never did culprit climb the hill to make confession to Father Farley with more dubious feelings as to what the penalty would be than did this boy to make confession of his troubles. To make the confession was all the

boy had to do; the gracious Father did the rest; he entered into the spirit of the tableau; coached the boy how to act his part; loaned him his long black robe, with something less than a thousand little buttons down the front; a large gold cross and three-cornered hat; accepted two complimentaries; came with a friend and sat in about the fourth row from the stage in Young's Hall and saw the play.

It took a number of pillows to pad the straight front of Edward P. Bailey into the portly form of the man of destiny, but the stage priest was the real thing (physically) and no sham.

The priestly costume was returned to its owner in good time and he seemed to think more than ever of it after its appearance on the stage.

Father Farley, a childless man, understood and knew how to treat a boy right, much better than the women did. By his graciousness and kindness he won the good will of all the school and the lifelong remembrance and gratitude of that boy.

GOVERNOR MATTESON'S WOOLEN MILL.

Joel A. Matteson's woolen factory was Joliet's first important manufacturing industry and stood on the south side of Jefferson street, at the east end of the bridge, its water power coming from above the dam, through a head race under the street. There was also a forty-two horse power engine and boiler, the exhaust steam being used to heat the factory—a steam-heated building in Joliet nearly sixty years ago! The factory employed about fifty hands, mostly girls. If there are any of those girls around, will they kindly arise and remain standing until they are counted? The capacity of the factory, and the girls, was over two thousand yards of cloth per week.

Wool was received from nearly every county in the State, as it was the custom for neighbors to club together and make up loads of wool, instead of making individual trips. The method of doing business cannot be better described than it is in this quaint, old-time ad.-form of '46.

“TO FARMERS.

“JOLIET WOOLEN FACTORY.

“The subscriber is now prepared to do Wool Carding in the best manner and on short notice. Persons living at a distance need not wait longer than a reasonable time for their wool to be carded. Cash or wool will be received in payment. The subscriber will also keep on hand a large assortment of cloth of his own manufacture, which he proposes to exchange for wool. He will give one yard of heavy cloth for $2\frac{1}{2}$ pounds of wool of the same quality, or work wool upon shares, as follows: Give one-half of the cloth the wool makes, by receiving eight cents per yard from the customer upon his half. He will also manufacture for customers, blankets, jeans and flannels, as well as satinett and full cloth. Cloth dressing done on reasonable terms and short notice. Persons coming from a distance with a quantity of wool to be carded or manufactured, if obliged to stay over night, shall be to no expense.

“JOEL A. MATTESON.”

After Joel A. Matteson was elected Governor he found it impracticable to operate the factory, so it went out of business, was dismantled, and the chimney swallows came and took peaceable possession of the smokeless chimney. Early in the morning, when other chimneys were sending forth clouds of smoke, the draft of the old factory chimney sent forth its cloud of swallows—individual birds at first—then specks, fading beyond the line of vision, scat-

tering and catching insects in the air. At twilight there was the homecoming of those swift, tireless travelers of the trackless air, and the chimney's draft seemed downward, as the flocks of swallows eddied round and round, each round the circle growing smaller, denser, as the centripetal suction of the whirlpool drew them down into the darkness of the chimney's blackened walls.

The birds in the chimney excepted, the old factory was for years as a body without a soul, but in the belfry hung the bell that, in the days when the factory was full of souls, had called the hands to their daily labor at its looms.

There was a warning, conspicuously posted on the building, which read: "Any person caught trespassing on these premises will be handled without gloves. W. C. Wood, Agent." Ignoring this terrible warning, two boys had learned to find their way, in the night time, through the building, up the belfry stairs, and it was the duty and delight of this self-constituted committee of boys, whenever a Union victory was celebrated, during the Rebellion, to climb those stairs, seize the frazzled remains of the bell rope, and ring the old bell for all there was in it. One hot summer night in '63, the city was wild with joy over a Union victory; bells, whistles and everything that could make a noise doing duty, and the boys were at their post, taking turns in making the bell do its duty, when there came a dull, sickening thud of the clapper—the old factory bell had burst with joyous peals over the Union victory of—Gettysburg!

While on earth, "W. C. Wood, Agent," never knew who cracked the factory bell.

THE BLOOMER AND HOOP SKIRT EPIDEMICS.

"Coming events cast their shadows before," if the

bloomer craze, which struck Joliet in '51, can be considered as the forerunning shadow of the hoop skirt.

Mrs. Amelia Bloomer, a dress reformer, published *The Lily*, a semi-monthly magazine, at Seneca Falls, N. Y., in '49 and '50. She was not the inventor or originator of the costume, but it was named in her honor and worn by her, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucy Stone and other dress reformers, and while this backed up the good moral character and propriety of the costume to be worn by such model prudes, it was no guarantee of its artistic beauty or captivating qualities. "The great are not always wise, neither do the aged understand judgment," and "Three little girls from school" could give a whole congress or convention of dress reformers points on the gospel of agreeableness and the art of captivating men. It was not the logical costume for ladies and did not fill a long-felt want—there was no coquetry in it—by coquetry is meant the innate desire of woman to be and look agreeable, and the subtle, intuitive knowledge of how to do it. When a woman lacks, or outgrows her coquetry, she is a hopeless case, socially considered. The life of the bloomer was almost as brief as its skirts. It had its little day on the streets and silently disappeared. It was nearly two years after its appearance in the east before Joliet took it up and the innovation was so pronounced that private parties of ladies assembled and practiced wearing it before venturing to appear in public in the ungainly toggery.

The reaction from the bloomer was a jump to the other extreme—that monstrosity of fashion imported from France—the hoop skirt.

There are undoubtedly ladies living who, if they would confess to so great an antiquity, could testify that the hoop skirt was as dangerous a thing to navigate with as

[illegible]





a sail boat in a gale of wind, and that it could not be depended upon to behave at all times with circumspection, but that it was wayward and given to all kinds of fool tricks. These ladies, if such there be, will remember well how the hoops had to be compressed into a sort of elongated circles, when entering a church pew, and the strain it was on their minds and energies to keep those hoops from sliding over the back of the seat, if pressed down in front, or, if sat upon, from rising over the front seat. How a lady could enjoy her religion under such trying circumstances was one of the things that passed the comprehension of men.

The dresses were cut short at the top and long at the bottom; entirely concealing the black prunella gaiters and white hosiery, so that a boy or wayfaring man could form no idea of what a lady walked on—unless he stood on the street corners and watched muddy crossings. If this statement is doubted, just ask any of the boys of the fifties who were old enough to sit up and notice things.

The hoop skirt epidemic lasted all through the fifties and into war times; then passed away gradually, through the crinoline to the bustle—and so became a back number.

IDLE HOURS.

"In the Good Old Summer Time," when the hours of light were long between the rising and setting sun, farmers busy in harvest fields and the overwhelming majority of democratic voters away on gravel trains; business would get a little dull on Bluff street and the merchants have ample time to sit in the shade, whittle sticks, swap knives and lies, talk politics, religion and gossip, tell stories—good, bad and indifferent—some so bad that Royal E. Barber would not stay to listen, but pass on

with a sad, charitable smile which seemed to say as plain as words:

“Poor race of men, said the pitying spirit;
How dearly ye pay for your primal fall;
Some flow’rets of Eden ye still inherit,
But the trail of the Serpent is over them all.”

THE BRIDGES.

In prehistoric times the crossing of the Desplaines between the Juliets was by ford or ferry, until, as related by Historian Woodruff, a bridge was built, on a fiat money foundation, and floated off with the first flood.

Before the completion of the canal, the crossing at Jefferson street was by what came to be known as Casse-day’s Island. About the time the canal was opened a bridge was built from the west end of Jefferson street to the east end of Exchange street (all east and west streets changed their names at the river, on account of the fierce rivalry between the original proprietors). This bridge was built by subscription, the contributors having the right to take their receipts for subscriptions to N. D. Elwood, county clerk, whose certificate made them good for road and bridge taxes. The bridge was built of oak, combination arch and Howe truss, two spans, no sidewalk and no paint. The Howe truss was patented in ’40 and became the popular highway and railroad bridge for many years; the canal bridges and aqueducts were all of this pattern. The Subscription Bridge was there in the days of Haven’s sawmill, at the lower dam, and was a fine place to stand and watch the raftsmen jump from raft to raft and log to log, cut the binders and send saw logs over the dam and down the river to the boom at the sawmill. The Subscription Bridge was the one that often vibrated with the martial tread of the

Matteson Guards as they kept step with the music of Grosh's Band.

The next bridge was a two span, Howe truss, arch underneath the roadway and two sidewalks—Joliet was getting too high-toned to walk in the mud, in the middle of the roadway, with the quadrupeds. The arches of this bridge were high enough above the water to permit the passage of boats, as was practically demonstrated in a spring flood, when two canal boats broke from their moorings, took a plunge over the dam, started for New Orleans, got beached on an island just below town and lay there for years. This little escapade was hard on the boats and their owners, but it furnished lots of excitement to watch those runaway boats take a header over the dam, right themselves and float majestically down the stream, unhampered by captain, rudder or tow line.

Next came the stone bridge built by Henry and Haley, about '70, which has been replaced by the present magnificent steel structure—the evolution of the Jefferson street bridge.

There are not many feet walking to-day that trod the planks of the Island bridge, and the few feet left that crossed on the planks of the old Subscription Bridge take fewer, slower and shorter steps than they did in '49.

THE CANAL DRIVER.

In the economy of nature there are always to be found vocations for all kinds of men and men for all kinds of vocations. The canal driver, as a rule, was not a man, but a by-product of the canal, recruited from time to time from the rowdy gang (the word hoodlum was not coined at that time) and averaged from fourteen to eighteen years of age. This unique specimen of concentrated cussedness is now extinct in this section of the

country. He was a sort of Ishmael—that is to say, his hand was against every man and every man's hand was against him—especially the hands of the captains and relay station bosses. His leading vices were profanity and pilfering; any portable article along the line of the canal which he could make use of in his business had to be locked up, nailed down or watched. His portmanteau or grip was a two-bushel grain bag in which he carried the goods, chattels and personal belongings of himself and horses, and it contained a heterogenous mass, as any one can testify who ever saw one of those grips dumped.

But profanity was the canal driver's long suit; he could take the cube root of an oath and, with a dexterity and facility acquired by constant practice, raise it to a higher power—five, six and seven jointed oaths rolling from his throat and tongue as readily as the notes of birds. The captains generally had a well stocked vocabulary of more logical and dignified oaths which could be hurled at the drivers if they failed to keep the tow line from sagging in the water, or any other old thing went wrong in the propelling department. The captains damned the drivers—the drivers cursed the mules—the curses ended with the mules, just as generation does—nature's limit.

There were undoubtedly some good canal drivers—boys who grew to be useful and wealthy citizens, aldermen, perhaps—but they were in a hopeless minority.

As there are offsets for many of the annoyances and ills of life, so there was a compensation for the ranting of captains and raucous cursing of drivers in the melody of the boatman's warning call to the sleepy or sleeping lock tender, in the stillness of a summer's night: "Lock read-y-y-y-y, lock read-y-y-y-y; and the sound of the boatman's horn, sweet and clear as the voice of a far away whippoorwill.

HALF-WAY YEARS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

What were the topics and events in the mouths of the men of Joliet, in those middle ages? On what great public questions were they arguing and of what interesting news of the day were they talking, as they met in stores and offices, or sat upon the dry goods boxes along the streets whittling sticks?

The Democratic party was in the zenith of its power and popularity; the Federal party had gone out of active business; the Whig party was still alive and growling, not entirely in the death throes of disintegration, but in a transition and reorganization state. The leaders of the American party, better known as the Know Nothings, were making strenuous efforts to organize a party of one idea, like a fiddle with a single string; that party was not comprehensive enough for the United States.

The Abolition party, the party with the sentiment of liberty for its active principle; the principle which grew and spread until it revolutionized the United States, made up in brains and energy what it lacked in numbers.

The Anti-Mason party was dead and buried—as badly as they assumed Morgan to be.

The Republican party, the great eclectic, logical, permanent party of the future, was in its minority and had not voted.

The Missouri Compromise, Mason and Dixon's Line, 36.30 the dead line for slavery on the north, 54.40 or fight, the dead line for England, in the Northwest.

Fremont, the intrepid, gallant Pathfinder, had just blazed the way to California, over the divide, by Fremont's Pass, where the waters part and the wind is always blowing. Later on he went ahead as the first candi-

date of the Republican party, and blazed the way, almost to the White House.

Father Mathew, the great apostle of temperance, was in the country from '49 to '51, and the temperance crusade was on. Eugene Daly has one of the early pledges, which reads: "Founded by The Very Reverend Theobald Mathew on the 10th of April, 1838. Cork Total Abstinence Society. Pledge. I promise to abstain from all intoxicating drinks, except used medicinally and by order of a medical man, and to discountenance the cause and practice of intemperance. Eugene Daly has taken the Total Abstinence Pledge this 9th day of July, 1840. No. 211,078. Father Mathew, Pres."

Kossuth was in the United States and men were wearing Kossuth hats in honor of the distinguished visitor.

Jenny Lind, the Swedish Nightingale, with her charming personality and matchless voice, was in New York immortalizing "The Last Rose of Summer." Every man, woman and child who could read, was reading "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and singing, playing, whistling "Way Down Upon the Suanee River," that sweet negro melody which will be sung by generations yet unborn, as long as the Suanee River flows and when rag time rot is in the waste basket of useless and forgotten things.

CHOLERA YEARS.

"Brightest lights make deepest shades," and the bright, enthusiastic days of youth, hope and prosperity of the then young United States and the little western village and city were darkened by the black death shadows of the cholera years, worst in '32, '49 and '54, when men were filled with fear, and strong, apparently healthy men went home from office, shop and store, at close of day, and came not back again—before another sun went down,

frightened, awe-struck friends had placed the sand above them.

Doctors and undertakers worked day and night, and many a time a boy was wakened in the night and, listening, fell asleep with the gentle sounds made by Eugene Daly, tacking trimmings in the coffins, for mortality's long, last rest. In many homes there were widows and orphans—vacant chairs, beds with but one pillow where there had been two; and in the air the mournful sound of church bells, tolling.

In St. Louis there were 3,136 deaths in two months, in '49.

THE PLANK ROAD AND THE PLAINFIELD STAGE.

The stockholders of the Oswego and Indiana Plank Road Company met at the National Hotel on May 26, 1851, and elected Joel A. Matteson, Martin H. Demmond, Hamilton D. Risley, Isaac Cook and Uri Osgood, directors. The Plank Road was completed to Joliet in '52, but was never built to Oswego. The road began near Western avenue and Hickory street. There was a toll gate at the corner of the present boulevard and Granite street and another about a mile southeast of Plainfield. The toll to Plainfield for a horse and buggy was ten cents. The other section of the Plank Road began on Chicago street, south of Washington, and ran south through Jackson's Grove, headed for Kankakee, but ended abruptly out on the prairie. The company probably ran out of planks and money.

Men may come and men may go, but the Plainfield Stage is as perpetual as a corporation. It rumbles over the Plainfield pike, through the Big Slough, over the asphalt of Bluff street, past the National Hotel and across

the steel bridges just as regularly as it rumbled over Plank Road and wooden bridges fifty years ago. Steam railroad and electric line have both failed to put it out of business. Through the changing seasons of all the years for nigh a quarter of a century George Luce has held the lines and made the trips between Joliet and Plainfield. He has crossed the Lily Cache when the pussy willows began to bloom and frogs were singing in the spring; crossed it when lilies were floating on its water; crossed it when autumn leaves were falling on its banks; crossed it in winter when boys were skating on its ice. In all these years he has seen the farmers sow the seed in early spring, watched it sprout, grow and ripen into grain under amorous summer suns, and heard the humming of reapers in harvest time; watched the little colts, calves, pigs and poultry in barnyards and pastures along his route growing, from day to day. In summer suns and winter's blasts, snow, dust and mud, he has made his trips.

Plainfield people have had the time and the culture to read Emerson, understand and practice his precepts, and Emerson has said to them: "If we hurry we are slaves." But—the scene changes! Plainfield has a future; it has seen the last of its halcyon days of quiescent dream life. If it will bar out the beer garden, Sunday ball game and Sunday dancing it may become a charming summer resort and suburban city of lovely homes.

CHARACTERS AND FREAKS.

The natural law of distribution seems to allow each community its pro rata of characters and freaks—the smaller the community the more prominent are the freaks. Joliet claimed its allotment and the goods were delivered.

Joliet had a character long before it had a white man.

Shabbona, the Indian chief and white man's friend, was a character and a strong one. Shabbona did not have to be delivered. He was born down on the Kankakee in the year before the first Fourth of July and was "Johnny on the Spot" to welcome the first white settlers of Will county. Many times he risked his scalp by giving the white man friendly tips on the treachery of other Indians. He lies buried at Morris—the only Indian, in this part of the country, who has had the distinction conferred upon him of being buried with honors, and a monument, in a white man's cemetery, and the old Indian confers distinction and honor on the cemetery.

Old Steve Cleverly, Joliet's first veterinary surgeon, would most likely have thought he was being called names if that title had been applied to him, but he seemed to have a sort of animal instinct or intuitive comprehension of the constitution and anatomy of horses and called them all "Teevy's Babies." Steve was an eccentric, half-crazy, cunning combination, and when mounted on some fiery rack-a-bones he had intercepted on its way to the bone-yard, could furnish amusement all along the line of Bluff and Jefferson streets.

He was a solitary bird, flocked by himself, and was not known to have any relatives. After his death some one with more imagination than information started a rumor that Steve had buried a large amount of gold on Casse-day's Island. In his best days Steve did have some gold—about three hundred dollars—which he usually carried in a belt around his body but when going off on a perilous journey into the wilds of Troy or Channahon to buy hogs or doctor horses he would leave that gold with some trusted merchant for safe-keeping. His scanty hoard must have been pretty nearly exhausted at the time of his death.

"Hog White" was Joliet's first poundmaster, and it was his duty to arrest and impound all vagrant cattle and hogs found running at large. This was an innovation on the time-honored custom of allowing cattle and hogs the freedom of the city, and the right of pasturage on streets, alleys, vacant lots and enclosed ones, if they could break in. The poundmaster always filled up, as a preliminary for his arduous duties. It was fun all along the line to watch a drunken man trying to drive hogs and at times quite exciting when some angry owner undertook to resist the officer and rescue his swine from the clutches of the law. "Hog White" could stand off the men, but when the women in School Section tackled him he realized that he was up against the real thing.

There was a nullius filius and freak of nature, poor daft "Tom Napoleon," an inmate of the County House, whose reward for industry and general good behavior was a permit to wander into town, see the sights and visit with the boys. Tom was harmless and inoffensive, and with his weird ways and talk, a curiosity and object of interest to the boys, who were all his friends and would have fought for him had he needed defenders. One of Tom's hallucinations was claiming any horse that struck his fancy, and it was pathetic at times to hear poor Tom, in his dazed and puzzled manner, say: "Why does he keep my horse?" or "Why don't he give me back my horse?" Sometimes Tom seemed to have snatches of remembrance of other, perhaps better, days, but if he knew who or what he had been, he would not or could not and did not tell.

John Williams was for years the only citizen of African descent and had almost as much of a monopoly in sawing and splitting the hickory, white oak and maple for the store, kitchen and parlor stoves as Nick Stanton does

in the awning business to-day. Interlopers tried to break in, but old John kept on sawing wood.

THE HICKORY CREEK MYSTERY.

In the beginning of these sketches it was the intention to draw the dead line on the east at Desplaines street, and not trespass on the domain of Captain James G. Elwood, who has the ability and the necessary information to do the East Side ample justice in the matter of facts, events and reminiscences, most of which he saw and part of which he was. It is a duty he owes posterity to put some of these old things in print.

Notwithstanding the good intention of not leaving the West Side reservation, the affairs of the two sides at times become so connected, complicated and interwoven that it is impossible to make the story complete without reaching over the established dead line.

The great Hickory Creek Mystery began on Bluff street. Mrs. Schemmerhorn, wife of the lock tender, died and was buried in the old Stevens burying ground. About this time three doctors wanted a subject for dissection; whether they wanted this particular subject, or any old subject, is not definitely remembered. The M. D.'s were Doctors Heise, McArthur and Symington. A young medical student named Keeny, a brother-in-law of Dr. Symington, was to have twenty-five dollars for procuring a subject and burying the debris when the doctors had finished. A room was procured on the third floor of one of the brick stores in the block north of Exchange street. Keeny delivered the goods according to contract. Dr. Cascy, who had but recently come to Joliet as prison physician, was invited to take a hand in the dissection, but the young doctor was a popular society man and had too many interesting engagements on his hands to spare

time for the dissecting room. Joliet was very gay that winter. When the time came for removing the mangled body, Keeny started to put it back in the grave from which he had taken it. There was something chilly, unholy, uncanny in the air that March night; he lost his nerve from some cause; it may have been dogs, graveyard rabbits or ghosts; he was afraid to enter the old burying ground and took the remains to a stone quarry near Hickory Creek, covered them with rip-rap rubbish and snow. When the quarrymen began their work in spring there was a terrible odor which annoyed them so much they investigated until they found the cause. Excitement ran high. It was assumed that a most diabolical crime had been committed. Who was the victim? Who was the murderer and what the cause? A Mrs. Cook came forward and swore that it was the body of her daughter Manie, a poor, half-baked, loose-reputation creature who had disappeared from her home some time previous to the finding of the body. The old woman swore that the number and peculiarities of the teeth and other marks of identification were those of her daughter Manie.

Manie Cook was known to have been keeping company with a man named Richardson who was building the Universalist church at that time, and she had been seen hanging around a little office and sleeping room he had on the church ground.

The last time any one had seen her she was with Richardson, walking south on the C. & A. Railroad track. A woman swore she heard some one screaming in the vicinity of the quarry that night and numerous other odds and ends of circumstantial evidence were produced, which made it look pretty dark for Richardson.

The accused man was arrested on Sunday morning

while church services were being held in the little old church, and Henry C. Knowlton remembers the very words Mr. Walworth, the minister, used to explain to the congregation the meaning of the commotion on the church grounds. Richardson had to be well guarded in taking him to and from the jail and court house for fear of an attempt to lynch him. F. A. Bartleson was prosecuting attorney, J. C. VanAuken city marshal and E. C. Fellows attorney for Richardson.

When the climax had about been reached, John Roberts, a constable, came into the court room with a veiled woman, and the spectators held their breaths until that veil was raised and revealed the face of the murdered Manie Cook, Fellows' star witness. The assumed tragedy proved to be a farce. Fellows got a farm from Richardson for his services and it is a peculiar fact that the same farm has been acquired three times by lawyers for defending men on the charge of murder.

The Henderson stock company was playing here at the time; the great Hickory Creek Mystery was dramatized and played by this company in old Young's Hall.

EMIGRATION AND CALIFORNIA FEVER.

All through those early years the people of the East heard the West calling and a stream of emigration trailed slowly over the bridges, stopped for supplies and information, passed around the National corner with prairie schooner and the standard outfit—a team, led horse, yellow dog and tar bucket under the wagon; the led horse to alternate with the horses of the team and for emergencies likely to happen; the tar bucket filled with tar to lubricate the running gear, and the yellow dog for companionship.

From the discovery of gold in Sutter's mill race, in

February, '48, the California Fever raged with fearful violence throughout the United States, and in less than four years nearly three hundred thousand energetic, daring men, good, bad and indifferent, who came by sea and land, were on the Pacific Slope.

This was the age when men were mad for gold and the "Argonauts" of '48, '49 and '50 went rushing west; moving faster than the emigrant in search for land; stopping at night to sleep as long as might be, with walls around and roofs above their heads; for well they knew the time was near at hand when, human habitations passed, they must make the weary, thirsty march by day in burning sun and blistering alkali sand and sleep at night, with the earth for a bed, a saddle or an ox yoke for a pillow, and around and above them—God, space, silence, and the stars—then up and on through "Death Valley"; the trail but too well traced with broken and abandoned wagons, bleaching bones of beasts, and stake-marked, lonely graves. But Indian ambush, Pawnee scalping knife, prairie fires and other perils passed—at the end of the trail, there was—gold.

MISCELLANEOUS FACTS.

In November, 1846, Charles Clement was selling, among other things in his general store opposite Merchants' Row, Sanders' first, second and third readers, Olney's geography, Parley & Hunter's geography, Colburn & Daboll's arithmetic, ruled cap and letter paper, quills, sealing wax, red tape and sand boxes (fine sand in a kind of pepper box was used before blotting pads were invented).

In November, 1846, the Anti-Mormon riots were playing a brief but spirited engagement in and about Nauvoo, and a new route to California had been discovered, 350

to 400 miles shorter than the old. This old route had stretches of 40 miles without water, but the new one had good watering places.

In December, 1846, a meeting was held to organize for a wolf hunt. W. J. Heath was chairman and Nelson D. Elwood, secretary. The boundaries were as follows: East line to form from head of Hickory Creek to Twelve Mile Grove; north line from head of Hickory Creek to Joliet; west line from Joliet to Starr's Grove; south line from Starr's Grove to Twelve Mile Grove. Henry D. Higinbotham, marshal; James T. McDougall, assistant marshal; captains, C. C. VanHorn, David Parish, James Letts, James C. Kercheval, Mansfield Wheeler, Sherman W. Bowen, G. S. Fake, John Welmaker, William McClure, Robert Mapps, Alfred Kirkpatrick, Joseph Shoemaker, Charles Starr, Alanson Williams and Martin Spellman.

But—there were wolves living in their happy homes within the boundaries of this famous wolf hunt long years thereafter.

April 3, 1848, there was a meeting at the court house to arrange for celebrating the completion of the I. & M. Canal. John Curry, president, and James T. McDougall, secretary. The canal boat General Fry left Lockport for Chicago April 10, 1848, came back to Joliet and took a load of wool for Matteson & Bradner to Chicago, the first shipment north by the new canal. The General Thornton was the first boat from the south and took a cargo of lumber from Haven's sawmill.

The telegraph line to Springfield was completed in June, 1848.

In July, 1848, the Morse Telegraph Co. proposed a telegraph station at Joliet if \$2,000 of stock was subscribed.

In 1848 Will county polled 1,080, East Joliet 193 and

West Joliet 108 votes, with Stephen A. Douglas, U. S. senator, and Long John Wentworth, congressman for this district.

The sale of canal lands and lots for Will county took place at Chicago, in September, 1848.

The first Middle Bridge meeting was held November 7, 1848, and the bridge built in 1849.

The State Bank charter expired October 31, 1848, and then the great bank fight was on between the Bankers and Anti-Bankers.

About these days the first Homestead Exemption Law was being agitated.

The packet J. T. McDougall was making three trips to Chicago a week. A business man could go to bed at night on the boat, do business in Chicago during the day, sleep another night on the boat and be welcomed home by family and friends the next morning. But this was luxury and speed compared with Frink and Walker's stages.

The McEvoy Brothers built a woolen mill on the DuPage, in Troy, in 1850.

Three-cent postage stamps and stamped envelopes were a new thing in 1851.

The scene changes. September 9, 1851, Nelson D. Elwood, who had gone to New York to attend a meeting of the Rock Island & Chicago R. R. directors, telegraphed that the contract for building the entire road had been let to Farnham & Sheffield, and later gave particulars. The contract price was one-half a million dollars, in \$25,000 monthly payments, if that much work was done.

Joel A. Matteson took a sub-contract to build thirty-five miles of the road, from Blue Island to the west line of Will county, and commenced grading, one-half mile east of Joliet, September 30, 1851.

The first sewing machine used in business in Joliet was in the tailor shop of a Mr. Robins in March, 1852.

And about those days the Joliet Signal was nominating Stephen A. Douglas for president and Joel A. Matteson for governor, subject to decision of national and state conventions, respectively.

Joliet had two Lyceums which were debating, "Resolved, That woman should enjoy the same political rights as man," and "Resolved, That man is a free moral agent." Also two literary ladies who wrote prose and poetry for home and magazine consumption, Mrs. E. Jesup Eames and Mrs. E. A. W. Hopkins, the last-named lady being assistant editor of the True Democrat.

THE OLD SCHOOL HOUSE ON THE HILL.

Joliet's first real school house was built on North Broadway, on the same grounds now occupied by the Fourth Ward School.

It was built in '49, and for those days considered something to be proud of. One little incident will show the difference between the equipment of that school and the schools of the present. It had grubbed along without a Webster's Unabridged Dictionary until '53, when a committee of ways and means, with Prof. Loop as chairman, held a session around the remains of an old stove, lying in the school yard, and decided to sell it for old iron as a beginning for a dictionary fund.

As soon as the present handsome school house was completed the old one was to be torn down and those who had been pupils within its walls decided to have a reunion and call in all of the old boys and girls for a final roll call, and many who had met and loved and parted in the long ago came together once more.

The old boys stood the racket pretty well, but the girls

did not seem to enthuse to any great extent and the gayety was somewhat forced.

But many remembered the time when they were marched upstairs on Friday afternoons; the little melodeon was brought in from H. N. Marsh's and the young ladies played and sang some of those old-time songs—"Blue Juniatta," "Bonnie Doon" and "The Last Rose of Summer," and the tones of that little melodeon which a school boy could carry on his arm thrilled those youthful ears in a manner that could not be excelled by orchestra or costly organ in later years.

And the little fellows stood for the first time on the rostrum and spoke "The Boy Stood on the Burning Deck," and after the intervening years stood there again in the pride and strength of early manhood and shouted, "I go, but I return."

And the little girls with rosy cheeks, curly hair and fresh aprons in childish voices had recited, "Mary Had a Little Lamb," and later on in scornful tones recited, "Should Hagar weep? May slighted woman turn and, as the vine the oak hath shaken off, bend lightly to her leaning trust again?" Taken altogether, the reunion was not a hilarious affair for many of the care-encumbered men and women—hairs were too gray and wrinkles too many and deep.

The old school house, the grounds, the pupils were there, and memories came, but not the realities of "the odor and bloom of those bygone years."

THE WANDERER'S RETURN.

After over fifty years of absence, an old man, wandering back to Joliet, would find more familiar buildings on and around old Bluff and Broadway than on all the other streets of the city combined. But he would look

in vain for once familiar names on signs and door plates. One by one, they have been gathering home; time and again the hearse has stood before the homesteads, while sympathizing friends and neighbors have passed in, through crape-draped doors; breathed the odor of roses and lilies of the valley; heard the voices of ministers repeat the familiar words: "I am the resurrection and the life," and other voices, sweet, sad, low, singing: "Lead, kindly light, amid th' encircling gloom, lead thou me on." And now those names, once written on wood and metal in perishable paint, are engraved on enduring granite and marble in the surrounding silent cities. The funeral flowers have withered on, the grass has grown over, and birds sang cheerfully, in the tree tops above their last resting places—just as they will when we are gone.

THE VALLEY OF RUINS.

When light fogs hang along canal and river, with the sunlight glimmering through, or the haze of Indian Summer hovers in the air; things indistinctly seen—events indistinctly recollected—make the River Valley from Joliet to Morris seem like a vale of ruins—from the sublime to the insignificant.

A land where things have been—and ceased to be; visions of things which were to be but never came. Moraines and glacial drift; bed and banks of a great prehistoric river; Mount Joliet—the spot where Kenneboo's treacherous assassination of Pontiac, the great Ottawa chief, began the feud which terminated at Starved Rock and the extinction of the once powerful tribe of Illinois.

The spots where things have been and are not begin at what was Adam's dam, where Haven's grist mill ground the grain and his saw mill sawed the lumber in the days of Juliet. Dam, grist mill, saw mill, paper mill and wire mill, which in turn used the water power, have all disappeared.

The great commercial tragedy at the Enterprise in '92 left the plant but swept away the men who built it.

The Tin Plate Mill, from which so much was expected—only a spot of rust.

Palmyra; Deacon Brandon's dream, in Section twenty—only a memory and a vacated plat in the records of Will County.

Mount Joliet; its sky line gone; its gravel gone to make good roads and its clay to make good lands.

Mount Flathead's doom is sealed; steam shovels will soon be scooping it onto gravel trains.

L. B. Graft & Co.'s cobblestone quarry, which would have made its owners rich beyond the dreams of avarice—if city contracts had held out through only a few more administrations.

In September, '35, Dr. Isaiah M. Treat platted and recorded Vienna, on the east side of the Desplaines, in Section Two, Channahon Township; and in June, '36, he platted and recorded Buffalo, in the north-west quarter of the same section, on the west bank of the river. This was an ideal spot for a city, and at the time had great possibilities, for the line of the canal was not permanently located and might pass through or near Buffalo.

The grand, Mississippi-like sweep of the river, or Lake Joliet, as it is always called, forms a letter S; and in the curve are large marshes, the way stations for great flocks of wild ducks, geese and other feathered tourists during their migrations between the north and south and has always been the sportsman's harvest field, but an unknown land to most of the city dwellers only five or six miles away. For years the pollution of the water made the locality undesirable until Lake Michigan was headed down the channel, widening and deepening the river and improving the quality of the water, thus making a grand boating course for several miles.

A number of Joliet and Lockport people and a colony of I. S. P. officials have selected the site of Dr. Treat's ancient Buffalo for summer bungalows and club houses. It would probably puzzle this new generation of Buffaloes to locate the grand plaza, large lots and broad streets as platted and recorded.

Dr. Treat was an uncle of Mrs. S. O. Simonds, and the owner of Treat's Island, where he built a grist mill in early times, which was washed away; and later there was a saw mill, which has disappeared; but the head race that sent the water down to make the wheels go 'round still splits the island in two.

Channahon—the Indian name for meeting of the waters, and a beautiful spot for a trysting place—is almost a “Deserted Village” and full of pathos for those who knew it in better days. It was a lively business place before the railroads came and took its grain trade away. The warehouses and mill went to ruins long ago and the water power is unused.

In the past, Channahon Township and Village have furnished many of the county's most prominent men.

The old-timers will all remember Burke Van Alstyne's negro “Dick,” the first and for a long time the only colored gentleman in the county, and as full of fun as a barrel of monkeys; for a Fourth of July or circus day in Joliet would not have been complete with “Dick” left out.

Allen P. Carpenter, who held most of Channahon's offices after Joseph N. Fryer passed away, cannot be tempted to leave his comfortable hotel quarters in Chicago, for he thinks South Clark Street is livelier on a rainy day than Channahon is on the Fourth of July.

It is within the possibilities that an electric railway company may secure the old tow path for a right of way, and Channahon may prove a very lively competitor with Plainfield for the excursion, park and summer resort business. There are lots of things to be seen down the valley of ruins.

The next Deserted Village on the Trail is Dresden,

at the foot of Dresden Heights. It once had hopes, and men are buried in the old hill side cemetery who died there in '47. The warehouse, church and school have disappeared, but the gray old weather beaten tavern still stands the wear and tear of time and reminds a man of a bad half night he spent there about forty years ago. He started from Joliet late in the afternoon to ride a half broken colt to Morris; the colt was a hard rider and time slow; the result was that midnight and a terrific thunder storm overtook horse and rider in the Dresden timber. The preliminary frequent flashes of lightning were welcome for showing the road, but when the wind and rain got in their work the situation became, to say the least, unpleasant, and a light in the old tavern window looked quite inviting. Although it was one o'clock there were five men sitting with their heads together as if in close and secret conference. They were not the kind of men to inspire confidence in a stranger, and immediately all the legends he had heard of horse thieves and hidden horses found in the Dresden timber flashed through the man's mind; but the tempest was on in all its fury and he had had enough of that, so he went and asked for lodging for himself and horse, and was shown up to the southeast corner room, where he pulled his bed across the door, laid a little Smith & Wesson under his pillow, went to sleep, and found himself and horse all right in the morning; but if those men had been horse thieves and not just common rough farmers, as they proved to be, they would never have thought of stealing that colt, for he was horse thief proof—a strongly marked Arabian piebald that would be noticed and remembered by every one who saw him.

The view from Dresden Heights looks better when seen in broad daylight in midsummer, with cheerful

company, than it did on that tempestuous night when all that could be seen was the glimmer of light in that old wayside tavern window. The view is as grand and in some respects resembles the view obtained from the old Hotel Raymond at Pasadena, California.

The Aux Sable aqueduct and Shermanville is as romantic a spot as can be found in Will County. Most delightful picnic grounds for little parties are hidden all about the place. Shermanville was a quarry town where the sandstone was quarried just after the Chicago fire to build the Sherman House. The dump is overgrown with large trees, and only traces of the stone saw mill can be found.

The most romantic object is the distillery, which looks as if it might be a thousand years old; but it is not, for it was owned by John McNellis and making whisky when Horace Weeks was United States Revenue Collector, and had trouble enough to make an ordinary man—but not a philosopher like Horace—lose faith in human nature and the United States Government, too. It was burned during Mr. Weeks' term of office, and it took a trip to Washington to convince the Revenue Department that he was not to be held responsible for the taxes on the high wines destroyed by fire.

THE OLD VIRGINIA TAVERN ON THE OLD SAC TRAIL.


Brightest was its last—the fatal hour when flames consumed all that was combustible of a historic relic which has for several years been pointed out to the thousands of excursionists on the Illinois & Michigan Canal and Rock Run Park.

Not on account of great antiquity, great events, crime, tragedy or scandal; not for its intrinsic worth or value, architectural form or picturesque environments was it an object of interest, but from the fact that it stood as a type of wayside taverns which, in their day and generation, played an humble but essential part in the settlement of the west, in the second quarter of the nineteenth century.

The old Virginia Tavern has acquired a reputation for great age by being confused with a very ancient tavern which stood between the Virginia and Rock Run. The exact year in which the Virginia began business cannot be readily ascertained, as about the only person who knows it is too much of a churl to impart the information.

The Selfridge Tavern at Rock Run, which has been the Miller homestead for a great many years, was completed by Dr. Selfridge in the spring of '48 and a grand country ball was announced for Thursday, the first day of June, in that year; dancing to commence at four o'clock in the afternoon in the "splendid house and one of the best ball rooms in the country."

The Virginia was probably built about '49 or '50. At



any rate it was there when Allen P. Carpenter came to Joliet; it was there when Wallace W. Stevens was a boy, teaching school at Dresden; it was not there when Adam Comstock lived with his father on Mount Flathead, from '37 to '41; it was there when James G. Elwood, a small boy then, was passing it in a thunder storm, and a flash of lightning frightened the horse so that it plunged and broke the thills; it is more than likely it was one of Alonzo Leach's stopping places when he was canvassing the county as a Whig candidate for Sheriff—and the only Whig elected in the county.

Clay Casseday thinks he remembers dining there when he ate soup without a napkin and dried apple pie with a three-tined fork, and his legs were not long enough to reach from the chair to the floor; Jim Ferris is quite positive that the Virginia was a tavern long before trouble began between him and Charley Barber about that coat.

Joliet's early horse races were run over a straight mile course which passed the Virginia; they were gentlemen's races, money in the stakeholder's hands, no pool selling and no race selling—the best horse to win.

More than fifty years ago, Fred Woodruff and Rodney House—two little daredevils in their early teens, who had not arrived at the years of discretion—were enticed into running away from school to play the part of jockeys in a running race between horses owned by Paddock and Van Auken. Rodney rode Van Auken's horse and Fred rode Paddock's; Rodney and the Van Auken horse came under the wire all right, but the Paddock horse bolted, went off on the side, over the fence into Leach's pasture. Rodney thinks he remembers there was a day

of reckoning that night which took some of the sport out of the day's fun.

Horse stealing was an "infant industry" in the west in early times, which was not fostered by a protective tariff. Away back in war times the Sheriff of Will County got notice from an Indiana Sheriff to be on the watch for a family of horse thieves; that the mother, daughter and son would probably try to meet the father and another son somewhere around Joliet. The Sheriff had a deputy who, though young in years, had an old head on his shoulders and had developed a remarkable tact for detective work. To this boy detective was assigned the duty of looking after the ladies and springing a trap on the men. The detective found the women camping near the Virginia, and, with a country cowboy's outfit of a plug of a horse with a blanket for a saddle, he hung around, pretending to be looking after his cows. The men soon came and joined the women and the family headed towards Channahon; but there was more than one road to Channahon, and the detective and his posse were lying in ambush at a suitable place for springing the trap. A shotgun was the first thing the detective saw that needed his attention, so he sprang into the wagon and seized it. Rufus R. Allen, one of the posse, had no confidence in revolvers but had provided himself with a shotgun and made it his duty to cover the old man of the gang. Those who remember R. R. Allen will readily understand that it would make a man—even a horse thief—feel sick all over to see that ugly looking man with an ugly eye sighting him along the barrel of a gun. The shotgun did the business, the gang surrendered, were handcuffed, brought to Joliet, lodged in jail, and before the red tape could be unwound for a

writ of habeas corpus the men were railroaded back to Indiana. They succeeded in getting away from the Indiana jail and were next heard of in Iowa. An Iowa sheriff, or detective, chased the girl and a stolen horse fifty miles in one day before he ran her down; and the old man was found in a river with his neck at one end of a rope and a stone at the other—well-known trade-mark of a vigilance committee.

It will be a surprise to many of the newer generation to learn that the deputy and boy detective was ex-Senator George H. Munroe, who could, if he would, fill a book with thrilling and interesting episodes of his youthful sheriff and detective work and the lawless and desperate characters he had to deal with when Joliet was Provost Marshal's Headquarters.

The Old Sac Trail came from Fort Malden, in Canada, through Niles, Michigan, forked east of Joliet, near Oakwood Cemetery; one branch crossing the Desplaines between Joliet and Lockport and the other south of Jefferson street; running thence in a southwesterly course down the Desplaines Valley, through Channahon and Morris to Ottawa.

With the coming of the white man the trail became first a bridle path, then a public highway, stage and mail route.

Explorers and frontiersmen of the Daniel Boone type had passed on to regions where no man ever had come, and they hoped no man ever would come, but leave them, like Robinson Crusoe, monarchs of all they surveyed. Regions where they could be alone and not annoyed by the crack of a neighbor's rifle, the crying of his children or the barking of his dogs.

The country swarmed with prospectors and specu-

lators looking for farms, city, town, mill and tavern sites. These were the palmy days of the wayside tavern and there were five or six between Joliet and Morris, planted along the Old Sac Trail.

The Old Sac Trail does not end, but these sketches must, at the tomb of Shabbona, in Evergreen Cemetery at Morris, where the grand old Indian and eight members of his family are buried. He died July 17th, 1859.

The tombstone is a large, uncut red granite boulder about four feet high, and has the simple inscription,

SHABBONA

1775—1859

The name is spelled many different ways, and N. Matson, the historian, says that he has seen it on documents spelt in seventeen variations, and he spells it Shaubena.

Evergreen Cemetery, on the Old Sac Trail, is a fit spot for Shabbona, last of his race in this part of the country, to be buried; for his moccasined feet must have gone over the trail many times in his acts of beneficence for the paleface.

His skin was tawny—his soul was white.

THE ILLINOIS AND MICHIGAN CANAL.

HARKING BACKWARD—LOOKING FORWARD.

You have grown old and feeble, and you're sadly out of date :
With nearly sixty years of service, met a thankless fate.
Your early friends are nearly gone, buried and forgotten ;
Your walls are tumbling down, your boats, locks, and bridges
rotten ;
Your heel-path is trespassed on, and looks very much abused,
Your tow-path is weed grown, for want of being used.
For repairs and maintenance you ask a little pittance,
The answer came, "Beggar, be gone," adding "a good riddance."
You have learned the cruel lesson of humanity's ways.
You're told you must trot in the class who have seen better days.
Those there are who remember well, and never will forget,
How honestly you paid off that six million dollar debt,
How Congress thought the scheme so magnificent and so grand,
Gave three hundred thousand acres of richest prairie land ;
Said a canal connecting link between Lake, and Gulf, and River,
Was compensation equal, and satisfied the giver.
Then Illinois took the contract to maintain forever
This great public waterway from the Lake to the River.
Forced from your proud position, once powerful and rich,
Sneered at by the Tribune as mere "muddy tadpole ditch."
Your water, once pellucid, 'tis a thousand pities
That it should be polluted with sewage from the cities.
Once you regulated tariffs, and set the pace for freight,
Figured in politics, a power in the Prairie State.
Then the railroads all got busy, bankrupted you at last,
But left you one collateral—a clean financial past.
Now the fact is you are not dead, you are only sleeping,
And your existence a check on railroad greed is keeping.
You will live to down this great scheme to kill the ship canal
And put you out of business from Chicago to La Salle.
"The new king knew not Joseph," words written long ago,
Retribution's sure and certain, sometimes a little slow.

And perchance when Uncle Sam takes this matter in his hand,
Gets to thinking of that generous grant of prairie land,
Asks his legal councilors to tell him how he should act,
When a sov'reign state lays down on an unfulfilled contract,
There will be something doing in the State of Illinois
That will not fill the railroads with undiluted joy;
That the words "forever maintain a public waterway"
Were meant for business—and the canal has come to stay.

And now those historic figures come thronging thick and fast,
While thinking so intently of this pathway of the past;
Heading the brave procession stalks the saintly Pere Marquette,
And right along beside him, the commercial Joliet,
With pious credulity trusting the Lord would provide,
If they'd an Indian hunter and parched corn on the side.
The one with his mind on Indian soul salvation bent,
The other with clear, practical commercial schemes intent.
Joliet, the first man with mind enough to understand
The great commercial aspect of this portage neck of land.
Sandaled feet, gray capote, with altar strapped upon his back,
Making on the savages a missionary attack;
Hennepin, brave but tricky, for whom it was no great strain
To lie about discoveries, false honors to obtain.
Robert Chevelier De La Salle, brave Tonty by his side,
Bright hopes within his bosom, dark disaster for his guide,
Jealousy, treachery, crouching, camping on his trail,
With his courage, his endurance, he never thought to fail,
Until the assassin, by that lonely Texas river,
Laid his worn body low—sent his soul to God the giver.



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